

# punch

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



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## Charivaria

MR. DE VALERA predicts that the war will last another four years. Nevertheless, he is resolved to hold out grimly.

GOERING recently had an interview of several hours with MUSSOLINI. As a result it is expected that the DUCE will announce that he has no further territorial claims on Italy.

At one coastal town, sea-gulls swoop down and seize sprats from the slab in a fishmonger's shop-window. When they can be regarded as regular customers they will probably go under the counter for mackerel.



Steps are being taken to prevent people from making overcoats from travelling rugs. Carpet slippers, however, are still quite legal.

Signor MUSSOLINI is asking Spain to pay £62,000,000 for Italian help in their civil war. This rather suggests that General FRANCO bit off somewhat more Italian help than he could do with.

"THE WEEDING took place quietly at St. Mary's Church on Friday, of . . ."—*Wedding Report in Kent Paper.*  
Now everything in the garden is lovely.

"New restaurants seem to be opening in London almost nightly," says a gossip writer. We understand that the latest addition to the gaiety of our night life is an attractive Powdered Milk Bar.

"In Court, the daughter said she took both pairs of shies. Defendants were fined 40s. each."—*South Wales Paper.*

In peace-time they might have got three shies a penny.

A husband in a London police court said that members of his family had been criticizing him a lot lately. Perhaps the best thing he could do is to demand a vote of confidence.



A man arrested for robbing basement premises told the court that he was eighty years old and had come down in the world. Octogenarian cat-burglars are comparatively rare.

We gather from certain guarded references in the daily Press that this country has lately been experiencing an unusually long spell of weather.

A tobacco factory was burnt down in a German city. The Gestapo kept back large crowds of eager inhalers.



## What! No Soap?

THE Whale who swims in Icy Seas  
Gives Butter (but refuses Cheese),

And this Essential Margarine  
Is also used to make us clean;

But which is better? To be fed  
And have my Whale-oil on my Bread,

Or look conspicuously bright  
Through being tubbed from Morn till Night?

I need no Soap for washing with  
(Says Henry Brown of Hammersmith),

I count it Base Ingratitude  
To wallow in my Country's Food

If I can save these Vital Fats  
For Soldiers, Sailors, Wrens and A.T.S.,

And those who make the Tank, the Shell,  
And have some left for Me as well;

And I can trust the Government  
To see my Coupons wisely spent

On either portion of their plan—  
The Inner and the Outer Man.

But if the Time should ever come  
When Beer and Whisky, Wine and Rum,

And Brussel Sprouts and Stuff in Tins  
And Necessary Vitamins

And Bread and Meat and Milk should fail,  
And we depend upon the Whale,

Or any Necessary Grease  
To End the War, and Win the Peace,

The Government I dare to hope  
Would utterly abolish Soap;

The Honest Dignity of Toil  
Derives from no Exterior Oil,

And men whose Hands are far from Clean  
Can be sustained by Margarine,

And Cleanliness is not so good  
As Supplementing England's Food.

The Rich, the Poor would lay aside  
Their old Ablutionary Pride

And Duke and Dustman cry "By Gosh!  
We will send Nothing to the Wash."

The noble Viscount Beaverbrook  
Who hangs his coat upon a hook

And sits him down beside his Neighbour  
The humble Minister of Labour

Would see with Joy (he is so tough)  
The Spots of Ink upon his Cuff,

And Mr. Foot and Mr. Bracken  
Would care not if their fingers blacken,

And Food would murmur to Supply  
"Who bathes?" "Not I, my lord, Not I."

And the Prime Minister himself  
Would lay his collar on the shelf

And say "It shall be scrubbed no more  
Till Hitler lies upon the floor."

And Girls should glory in the Grace  
Of having Soot Marks on their face,

And Sergeants shake the Barrack Square  
With "What's that clean man doing there?"

But We and all our Engines (run  
By Lubricants) should flout the Hun,

And Britain should not give up Hope  
Till she had eaten all her Soap.

EVOE.



"Didger 'ear me broadcast on salvage the other week?"



### THE SPRING OFFENSIVE

"Nearly ready, mein Fuehrer!"



*"Now take great care of yourself, Ulrich, and don't allow anyone to make you a general."*

### Little Talks

**H**AVE a drink, Poker?  
*Thanks, old man. A small whisky, please.*  
 No whisky, Sir.  
*Oh. A dew-drop of gin, then.*  
 No gin, Sir.  
*Light ale?*  
 No bottled beer, Sir. Draught ale only.  
*This, I suppose, is what the statesmen call teetotal war. All right. Half a pint.*

*Well, how d'you feel? Complacent? Or defeatist?*

*I've been so much lectured about how I ought to feel that I'm afraid to feel*

*anything. I just trundle along, doggedly doing my—*

*Ah, but that's no good. That's dangerous apathy.*

*It's difficult, isn't it?*

*Oh, no. As long as they've got something to lecture you about, all's well. How would you like to have to write a leading article on the war every day?*

*Must there be leading articles?*

*Certainly. Especially if there's no news.*

*The farther the war spreads the less news there seems to be.*

*There's always Russia. Not to mention Japan.*

*And Rommel.*

*Yes. I was trying to reckon up yesterday how many times that damned fellow has "faced annihilation."*

*I make it four. And three times he's been "at bay."*

*Does the stag at bay ever chase the hounds away and bite them?*

*No. That would be cheating.*

*Quite.*

*I say, what liquid is this? Cold tea?*

*No, old boy. It's what we call washing-beer.*

*It reminds me of that grand old ditty of the last war—"Lloyd George's*



Beer." But I can only remember the last chorus:

"Lloyd George's Bee-er!  
It isn't de-ar.

Oh, Horatio Bottomley arose and said  
To Mr. Asquith in the Old King's  
Head

'Here's death to our enemies—and  
may they be as dead  
As Lloyd George's beer!'"

A charming picture. Horatio and Asquith at the Old—

I sang that to Lloyd George once.

What did he say?

He said "Sing it again."

Do the "Reconstructors" want to bring the old fellow back?

I dunno. They never say who it is they want to put in. They only know they want to put somebody out.

Who? I mean—whom?

Even that's not very clear.

The "Men of Munich," I suppose?

That's one lot. But you've only got to say "What about Stalin and Molotoff?"—and they shut up like a sea-anemone.

Hitler, after all, was a Man of Munich.

Ah, but he got what he wanted!

No. He wanted war.

How do you know?

Well, my bet's as good as yours, old boy. Anyhow, he made a Pact of Peace.

Yes, and went on arming!

So did we.

What are we arguing about?

I simply said that Hitler was a Man of Munich.

Is this a very profitable line of thought?

No. That's just what you were saying, wasn't it, old boy?

Quite right. Sorry, old boy.

What I want to know is—there surely must be some fresh blood somewhere?

Why?

Well, because—well, I mean, some of those old boys have been in office for years—

Not a bad testimonial. It would kill you in a week.

Maybe, but as that chap Granville keeps saying, they must be tired and stale.

Gladstone, I believe, introduced his Home Rule Bill at the age of 83.

Well, as a matter of fact, I was never very gone on Gladstone.

Oh?—

No one is irreplaceable.

You mean, if Lloyd George and Foch had both died in 1916 it would have made no difference to the last war?

Not quite that, perhaps, but—

And you mean, if Drake had gone on playing bowls when the Fleet put out to sea it wouldn't have mattered?

How can I say that?

I thought you did say that.

What I meant was, there must be more than one man capable of being Chancellor of the Exchequer, for example—

Certainly. I can think of two, at least, who would be quite good. There may be more. But none of them, once made C. of E., would win the war. There may be a dozen other chaps who could do this or that job as well as the chaps doing them now—or even better. But none of them would win the war.

That's not the point.

Yes, it is. If you could show me that we had rows of wasted political and strategic geniuses, rows of unused dynamos, rows of unsuspected human volcanoes, I'd say: "Go ahead—throw all these old buffers out and put the new boys in!" Certainly, if you could produce four new Churchills, or Lloyd Georges, or Drakes, or Wellingtons—

But the new men haven't had a chance!

Really? I should have thought that in two and a half years of war any heaven-sent geniuses, however shy, would have had ample opportunity to reveal themselves. Anyhow, where are they? A few names, please.

That's not my job. I'm not the Prime Minister.

I know. People never remember that when they begin these arguments.

What d'you mean?

Never mind, old boy.

But are you telling me that we've completely run out of big men?

By no means. I think History will say we had more than we thought. And everyone agrees that we've got at least one.

Yes—it's a "one-man-band."

I'm always amused to hear that complaint; because the people who make it most are the ones who do the most raving about Stalin. Yet, if ever there was a one-man-band government, I gather, it's his. He runs the whole thing, strategy and all.

Did they say, in the last war, that Lloyd George was a one-man-band?

I can't remember. I don't think so.

No. He had some big fellows about him—Milner, and Curzon, and Balfour, and—

Yes, but I expect they'd get hell from the critics to-day. If Halifax is a "tired old man," imagine what Granville would say about Balfour!

I wonder how Gladstone would have stood up to this sort of thing?

Ah, now you're talking! One reason, I think, why we're always complaining that we've not so many big men as we used to have in the old days is that the problems of to-day are so much bigger. Well, look at Gladstone's troubles at his most troubled time—what were they? Ireland—South Africa—Egypt—

It sounds familiar.

Yes, but think of all the other places where we have a trouble or two.

They never had anything like a World War to deal with, you mean? And the bigger the stage the smaller everybody looks?

Yes. I think the old man would have done his stuff, just the same. For, from all accounts, he really was a wizard.

But wasn't he against spending money on armaments?

Yes. That's why he resigned for the last time.

A Man of Munich.

And another thing is, of course, that we don't make it very easy for big men to appear, because the moment anyone shows a head above the rest we all say "Swelled head" and knock him down. We're so terrified of dictators that we don't like leaders. Perhaps we don't deserve to have them.

Yet we all yell for them.

Not all. A man said to me the other day that he didn't want a "big star" for P.M. He'd like to have a sound, simple, solid man who'd lead the House of Commons and sit back quietly while other people did the real work, and fought the war, and so on.

"Like Chatham?" I suppose you said. "Or Lloyd George? Or Gladstone?"

No. I said "Like Stalin?"

A. P. H.

## Landscape in Snow

THE earth is made of silver,  
The sky is made of lead,  
The trees are hammered ironwork  
Black above my head;  
The pond is chromium-plated  
With reeds of copper wire,  
The setting sun's a rusty disc  
Stained by a burnt-out fire.

The rooks are carved in agate,  
The swans are carved in jade,  
The mallard, teal and widgeon  
Of malachite are made;  
And I, on outpost duty,  
Forgotten and alone,  
Am all in bronze accoutred  
And soon shall turn to stone.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

## At the Pictures

LEAN FORTNIGHT

It's like old times to be seeing a French film again—as I wrote in April last year, and have till now had very little opportunity of writing since. I can't imagine where *L'Esclave Blanche* (Director: MARC SORKIN) has come from, but it is welcome, in spite of the catchpenny title which is calculated (and perhaps was calculated) to attract numbers of the wrong sort of public. The scene is Constantinople in—so the programme particularizes—1910; the story of a Parisian beauty who marries an enlightened, personable Turk without realizing that by everybody of his acquaintance she will be considered merely as his "first" wife. There is a somewhat melodramatic basis of "plot" (saved revolutionary's undying gratitude, last-minute escape across the border) but the story concentrates on the gradual discovery by the wife of her position. The dazzling VIVIANE ROMANCE feelingly presents her rising dismay and her determined struggle against the traditions of the country; JOHN LODGE as the considerate but puzzled husband wears his fez with an air; but as always in a French film, the detail and the minor characterizations give the most constant pleasure. This is really DALIO's film: DALIO, as the *Sultan*, a gloomy, scared, capricious, eccentric little autocrat in black, lunging about his palace in the manner of GROUCHO MARX, hiding round corners and letting off his revolver in a panic when startled by the inexplicable new electric light, caressing the little dog that cost him so much and giving it away when he is told it is a mongrel. This is not in the first flight of French films, but it has all the French virtues and the invaluable quality of freshness. It is intelligent, entertaining, amusing, sometimes exciting and quite different from anything else to be seen at the moment.

Even in the old days most of the readers of these notes very seldom got any opportunity to see a foreign-language film; and now, I suppose, when so many local Film Societies have closed down for the duration, and the average provincial cinema is concentrating as much as possible on laughter and song, the non-Londoner's chance of seeing *L'Esclave Blanche* is slender enough. Nevertheless, it demands to be noticed; and besides, the few other new films at the moment of writing are mostly a dull and pedestrian lot. If

we must have a superlative to justify the choice of one, I can only say that *Bahama Passage* (Director: EDWARD H. GRIFFITH) has the brightest colours.

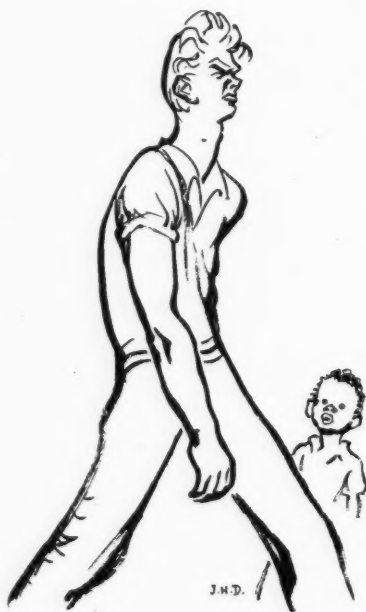


J.H.D.

[*L'Esclave Blanche*

## THE WALK-ABOUTS—I

The Sultan . . . . . DALIO



J.H.D.

[*Bahama Passage*

## THE WALK-ABOUTS—II

Adrian . . . . . STIRLING HAYDEN

This is one of those Technicolor South Sea island pieces, with no sarongs, no DOROTHY LAMOUR, but MADELEINE CARROLL and STIRLING HAYDEN, whom at one point, justly exasperated, she describes as "tall and blondsome." This he undoubtedly is; there haven't been such nicely-browened muscles since ROBERT PRESTON's in *Typhoon*, and Mr. HAYDEN is certainly blonder than Mr. PRESTON. The story is of what happens on the lonely West Indies island of Dildo Cay when into it "swaggers" (I quote the foreword) "a girl who has been around." Not very much happens really. At one point the girl who has been around expresses a wish for a hurricane; it would have livened up the whole affair a good deal if she could have had one.

Otherwise probably the best value (I repeat, *at the moment*; one or two promising films begin just after we go to press) is a non-fiction one, the Crown Film Unit's *Wavell's 30,000* (directed and edited by JOHN MONCK). This account of the first Libyan campaign is built up from official photographs, and among the people who explain it to us are officers of the three Services, including that Major (then, it appears, a Captain) who has more than once broadcast about it. You have to concentrate if you want to understand and remember; but no effort at all is required for you to be absolutely absorbed while the film is being shown.

About the British-made fiction film I happened to see at the same time as this, the less said the better. "September 1940" provides the dénouement, but apart from that the whole thing might have been made ten years ago; and although you never heard such incessant efforts to be witty by all concerned, the general level of the wit is fairly indicated by this example: "You can't make up your mind and love at the same time." R. M.

## Piscatorial Note

MOST fishing yarns are much alike. Look out for something brighter: "This case contains the only pike That caught a carpet-biter."

"As one woman reader says: 'Will this country ever be able to make a combined war effort when we possess people whose stomachs seem to come first?'"

Daily Mirror.

We might get 'em to walk backwards.

## Deterioration in War-Time

MONDAY

DEAR MISS BOLL-WHEEVIL,—It was indeed kind of you to send me the picture postcard of the dear old playing-fields of St. Foggarty's, and I assure you that it has been much appreciated by other residents in the hotel.

The air and the quiet here are improving my health hourly, and, so far, no bombs! The shops, though few, display goods unobtainable elsewhere, owing to so many of the population having been "evacuated." Shall I purchase one or two packets of cereals for the coming term?

Yours most truly, ENID CLARENCE.

WEDNESDAY

DEAR MISS BOLL-WHEEVIL,—I have obtained the cereals, a small packet of black pins—white, alas! no longer to be found—note-pads and a small bottle of boiled sweets. Have made inquiries as to face-powder, but choice is very limited owing to the war. The only varieties seem to be Lilac, Primrose, or French Ultramarine. I do not know if any of these would suit you, or shall I try for plain Fullers' Earth?

Very truly yours, ENID CLARENCE.

SATURDAY

DEAR MISS BOLL-WHEEVIL,—Raisins I fear, are quite out of the question. I found a few cigarettes at the furthest end of the village, but matches are very scarce. The man allowed me one box as a favour, but this, I am afraid, will scarcely see you through the term!! Could obtain no satisfaction with regard to methylated spirit, plain chocolate, or curling-pins. Will do what I can as to fountain-pens, but fear these are all needed for aeroplanes, etc.

Yours truly,

ENID CLARENCE.

TUESDAY

DEAR MISS BOLL-WHEEVIL,—I find, on making inquiry after receipt of your letter, that the man—who lives a mile or two out of the village at some distance—was not willing to undertake repair of cuckoo-clock, wrist-watches or alarm. His assistant has been called up and he is himself over seventy years of age and says that he could promise nothing until after the war.

The weather has indeed turned cold, as you say, and the fireside more agreeable than out-of-doors. The hotel, I must say, though small, is well-run and the comfort of the guests



"Ah me, how longingly I recall the pre-war joys of feeding at one's favourite restaurant—the welcoming head-waiter, the little table in the corner away from the band, the lights, the warmth, the movement . . .



Nowadays it's just absolutely impossible to get a table there!!!"

catered for in every way—coal fires everywhere. Yours truly,

ENID CLARENCE.

SATURDAY

DEAR MISS BOLL-WHEEVIL,—I have not felt able to approach the hotel management in regard to coal, as, on throwing out a feeler to members of staff, was convinced that they have only enough for their own requirements. Also, would present difficulty in regard to luggage.

I do not think stockings—even lisle—are to be found in the village.

Yours faithfully,

ENID CLARENCE.

WEDNESDAY

Boll-Wheevil, St. Foggarty's, Ham-super-Mare.

Sorry must decline to suggest change of employment hotel cook chambermaid porter etcetera.

CLARENCE.  
E. M. D.



"I was terrible this afternoon."

## The Royal Armoured Tram Corps

**W**E have heard a lot about secret weapons in this war. We have had the magnetic mine, radio-location, parachutists and fifth columnists. But speaking as a veteran student of military affairs, I must point out that secret weapons are no new thing. Long before the last war I myself had a hand in what would undoubtedly have been the greatest secret weapon of them all had it ever come to fruition.

I was riding in a tram in Sheffield in, I think, the year 1907 when an idea suddenly occurred to me. Why, I thought, had we military experts never considered the possibilities of the tram as a weapon? We had armoured cars and armoured trains—why not armoured trams? I became so lost in thought that when that tram reached its terminus I remained seated in it and was put away for the night. When the dawn broke over Sheffield next morning I had already formulated a rough plan.

Taking the tram with me to London by special train, I was at the War Office that same evening. I explained my plans to Colonel Stubbs-Treadmill, one of the greatest living military experts. He was electrified. He called in more experts. They too were electrified. The lights burned late in the War Office that night, and the chance burglar, passing through Westminster with his loot and seeing them, turned to his companion with a wild surmise. So the Royal Armoured Tram Corps was born.

In conditions of the greatest secrecy, tests and training began. We had twenty-eight men in a tram detachment in those days. No. 1 was the Sergeant-driver, No. 2 the Sergeant-Conductor. Their duties need no explanation. Nos. 3 and 4 were responsible for working the destination indicators. The front destination indicator read "Berlin," "Paris," "Madrid," "Teheran," as the case might be; the back one read "Previously Prepared Positions." Nos. 5 and 6 were responsible for putting up and taking down the advertisements as required. A really good detachment, on the command "Without advertisements, prepare to advance!" would generally have them out of sight within three seconds. The rest of the detachment were more or less spare—they manned the guns, kept a watchful eye on spitting (Penalty £5) and saw that nobody smoked on the lower deck. No. 28 had rather special duties. He carried a large brass fender wrapped in brown paper, and was perpetually trying to board the tram while the rest of the crew tried to prevent him.

In a short six months the R.A.T.C. had become a powerful and efficient force. Our chief difficulty in training was the necessity for absolute secrecy. To achieve this we had to fit in our training with the ordinary civilian tram services and do most of our work in such places as Huddersfield and Merthyr Tydfil. And in spite of the most elaborate precautions rumours began to get about. Bursts of machine-gun fire had been seen coming from a tram in Halifax. A formation of twelve trams had been seen charging at full speed down Corporation Street, Llanelli. Soon our British tramways became infested with foreign agents, and it was impossible to travel in a tram without being jostled by grinning Japanese or crop-headed Prussians.

The old school of military experts of course pooh-poohed the whole idea of armoured trams, and a bitter controversy began. Matters came to a head at the great autumn manoeuvres of 1909, when the new weapon was to be tried out for the first time. Of the two imaginary countries engaged in the exercises—Eastland and Westland—Eastland had trams, Westland had not. Stubbs-Treadmill, with myself as technical adviser, was in command of the tram units taking part. Our plan, roughly, was to capture London by a pincer movement, one column of trams pushing through East Ham while the other came round through Putney and Fulham. It was a daring and characteristic manoeuvre. But we had not reckoned with a malignant destiny.

Somehow the news that trams were to take part must have leaked out to the other side. Our columns, pushing through the outer suburbs to the centre of London with a suspicious absence of resistance, suddenly found that the tram-lines had been torn up everywhere. Some had been relaid in small circles, round which our heavily-armoured craft careered helplessly. Other lines now led straight into famous London buildings. Stubbs-Treadmill and myself, hurtling along in our staff-tram with a loud clanging of bells, suddenly found ourselves entering the reading-room of the British Museum. Lytton Strachey flung down his pen. Lenin looked up from his manuscript in alarm. We hung our heads and went out.

So the Royal Armoured Tram Corps ended in ridicule. We tried to revive it during the last war, only to be foiled by the invention of the tank. Yet even now I sometimes wonder if the armoured tram has a future. With the mind's eye I can often see the fleets of allied trams toppling majestically into Berlin on the day of victory.





"Region are making a surprise inspection at 1730 hours. Let the personnel know."

## Gran'pa in War

**W**HEN Gran'pa came to see us and there wasn't any war

He ladled out some excellent advice,  
We cultivated quiet as we never did before,  
Our manners were particularly nice,  
We learnt there were expressions we should never, never use,  
And how to keep our tempers in control,  
But we hadn't then been privileged to listen to the views  
Of Gran'pa hammering the coal.

For Gran'pa's come to stay and he's the only man about,  
And things have undergone a sudden change,  
He has to do a lot of jobs he'd rather be without,  
Apart from stoking up the kitchen range;  
His nerves are most erratic and he makes a lot of noise,  
His self-control is anything but good,  
And there's quite an education in the language he employs  
When Gran'pa's chopping up the wood.

DUM-DUM.

## Letters from My Char

**M**ONDAY. Dear Miss, please leave money for coal we havent got none hardly. I pay milkman. No apples so made bread-pudding from stale loaf. No laundry came. The gentleman what gives no name rang up. I need some new dishclothes. Sorry no saugages no green stuff. Monday a bad day.

Tuesday. Never saw no coalman so got coalite nob.

Made fire with marge paper to help burn up. No laundry came again to-day. I got a nice large caulliflower but expensive. Thank you for the tea it will come in handy Albert coming on leave tomorrow. Milk frozen this morning makes you sorry for them russians.

Wednesday. Dear Miss I have been about the rabbitt but they not sure what days they have these rabbitts in. My butcher has his Thurs so I try my way tomorrow. Albert says to thank you for the tea and bacon he is a good boy but his apetite is dreadful. I didnt turn out the sitting-room like what you said my chest being bad. No lux.

Thursday. I have made the rabbitt ready and prepared vegebles. Please do it gentle. Washing came to-day, it was 4/9 and only 2/6 change left in purse so I pay 2/3 of mine and take 1£ note. Hope you dont mind. The red jumper is not much to small and does nicely under my overall.

Friday. No coalman what can we do. I have brought something for your Birthday and it is in the larder top shelf. Sorry no steak so got Cutlits and Archokes for tonight. Mushrooms is 2/6 a half. The gentleman with no name rang up and said to ring back. I have fixed light in back room and hope you have a nice evening and all allright. I line up for them apples.

Saturday. Glad evening went of allright it werent no trouble. Glad you liked cake. Thank you for these bottles of stout it does me good. I drink your health and the war soon over. Coalman is come. Sorry I broke two glasses. Albert goes back today so I leave early. I need more furniture polish and I think the sweep to come there being no raids to bring it down naturall.

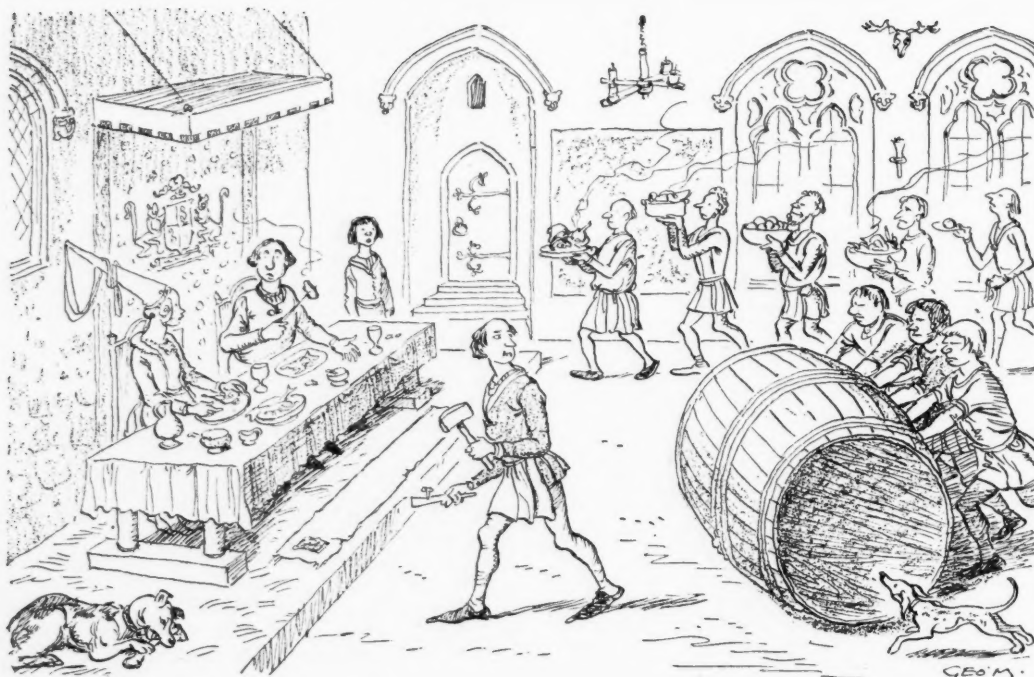
## Surprise for Everybody

"MASON.—Mr. and Mrs. Smith (née Mrs. Mason) . . ."

Notice in Local Paper.



ACANTHUS



*"This is definitely our last butt of Malmsey, dear."*

## The Great Moment

I'VE a shrewd idea  
That when the big "All Clear"  
Hoots, whistles, peals or otherwise lets loose  
That Someone's missed the steppe and cooked his goose—  
When round the world blows not the blatant tuba  
But the sweet news that Adolf Schicklgruber,  
The Universal Bore,  
Has lost the war,  
And Goering, Goebbels, Himmler  
And similar  
If lesser bores and liars  
Have all been bundled into Black Marias—  
(Not forgetting that poor puss-o,  
Musso)—  
I've an idea that *when*  
That moment comes, a million men  
Will without hesitation  
Express their jubilation.  
Perhaps we'll jump  
With childish glee upon our stirrup-pump  
And gas-mask, blow a last,  
Long, loud and liberating blast  
Upon our whistle, tear up  
Our identity card (or throw it to the pup),  
Romp round the sandbags with our youngest daughter,  
Or toast the occasion in ecstatic water.  
Each to his frolic; I, for certain,  
Will pull down every black-out curtain

(What snips, what rips, what rents  
I'll give 'em, those old cerements!),  
And after dark  
When bandits used to lark  
Above the roof-tops, and warden-moths came out,  
Attracted by a star, no doubt,  
That from some window showed—  
When even glow-worms glowed  
At their own risk—I'll burn the beastly things;  
And as the oil-soaked stuff takes wings  
And waggish neighbours crack out:  
"Oi! what about that black-out?"  
Upon the air will rise  
Uncouth but oh! how satisfying cries!

### British Sport

"Mr. George Hicks, M.P., speaking at Brighton, said that the Navy had performed true to tradition right through this war—its tradition of matchless skill and surpassing courage.

'Of course the Navy has suffered losses, some of them of a most serious nature,' he went on. 'The Navy will take its toll of revenge four-fold—we can know that. It has never failed us yet; it will not fail us now.'

OTHER SPORT IN BRIEF "

Sunday Paper.



### A WANDERING SPRITE

("My first duty will be to journey abroad, not only to go to Washington, but also, I think, to Moscow."—Viscount Beaverbrook in the House of Lords.)



## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done

**Tuesday, February 10th.**—House of Commons: The Services get a Rise—so does Lord Beaverbrook.

**Wednesday, February 11th.**—House of Lords: Wreaths for Reith.

House of Commons: Shipping Discussed in Secret.

**Thursday, February 12th.**—House of Lords: The Sinews of War Receive Attention.

**Tuesday, February 10th.**—The House of Commons developed a passion for strange words this week. The more pedantic Members were constantly rushing to the harassed librarians, asking for Murray's English Dictionary—or just sitting puzzled and bewildered.

The eccentricities of the Chamber's acoustics, together with a certain lack of elocution on the part of honourable Members, make many familiar words seem strange. But these words really were strange.

The PRIME MINISTER himself started it, quite likely, by putting down a motion resolving that the debate on



### HOLE-PICKER-IN-CHIEF

"I trust that he will read the White Paper before seeing which particular hole he wishes to pick in the scheme."

*The Prime Minister on Mr. Shinwell.*

shipping (to-morrow) was not to be restricted by the "rule on anticipation."

This rule has nothing to do with favours to come, or even what is sometimes flatteringly called "intelligent

anticipation." It referred merely to a rule which says that, once an M.P. has given notice to raise a subject in debate, no one may cut in and initiate a discussion on the same subject.

But the mysterious use of the word set people thinking, with results that were to be apparent later in the week.

Mr. CHURCHILL, with the air of a bringer of good news, entered with a sheaf of papers which he proceeded to study with the guidance and aid of his faithful A.D.C., Colonel HARVIE WATT.

Clearly pleased with life, he went to the Table at the end of Questions and said he would make a couple of statements of great importance.

Members sat forward eagerly.

Statement No. 1. Improvements in allowances for the Services. Compulsory allotments to be cut by 3s. 6d. a week (cost £17,500,000 a year); child's allowance to go up by 1s. a week (cost £5,000,000); pay to be increased by 6d. a day—to be paid after the war as a "nest-egg" (cost £32,500,000).

A gentle, Oliver Twistian cheer. Then a hail of acid supplementary questions. Sir ALBERT LAMBERT-WARD wanted an assurance that the nest-egg money (£9 a year) would not all be handed out in one prodigal stream. The House laughed at what it took to be irony, but apparently the knight was serious, and Mr. CHURCHILL playfully advised against counting eggs before they were laid.

Thereafter, in swift succession, ex-Servicemen, Civil Defence workers, firemen, the Women's Civil Defence services, were all recommended for similar increases in pay. But Mr. CHURCHILL put on his most Sphinx-like expression and gave nobody cause to hope.

The announcement definitely did not go over too well, so Mr. CHURCHILL tried out his next.

Statement No. 2. The work of the Minister of War Production, Lord BEAVERBROOK. This, so far as anyone could ascertain from a curiously un-Churchillian document, left a position (as one Member put it) of *status quo ante*—with not too much accent on the *status*.

His energetic Lordship, it would seem, is to make an attempt to co-ordinate a large number of different Departments, all pulling different ways for different things. Each of these Departments is to retain its separate existence, virility and powers.

This announcement went over even less well. Scenting this, with the infallible sense of the old war-horse, Mr. CHURCHILL ended with an almost

apologetic appeal that the plan should be given a fair trial.

Mr. HORE-BELISHA sweetly inquired why the question of man-power was excluded from the new co-ordination



### LORD WORKS AND PLANNING (Formerly Sir B.B.C. Reith)

proposals. Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, Minister of Labour, whose baby man-power is, nearly fell off the back bench on which he was perched, so eager was he to catch the precise terms of the reply.

He need not have bothered. There was no precise reply. Pressed, Mr. CHURCHILL said cautiously that the matter had been carefully thought out.

Mr. MAXTON blandly asked, with the air of a sick-visitor, whether the scheme had the enthusiastic support of the Ministers concerned. The House roared.

Rising for the umpteenth time, Mr. CHURCHILL said he did his duty: if it pleased the House, he was pleased; if it did not, then his conscience was clear.

On that basis the House let the matter drop for the present, with a half-promise of a two days' debate later.

**Wednesday, February 11th.**—Mr. ARTHUR GREENWOOD, Minister Without Portfolio, having explained the plans by which we shall build Jerusalem in England's bombed and blasted land, Messrs. AUSTIN HOPKINSON and JOHN MCGOVERN made use of their unusual words.

Mr. HOPKINSON expressed the view that, as we none of us knew whether the next generation would live above or below ground, all planning-schemes were "flapdoodle" from A to Z.

Mr. MCGOVERN, not to be placed second in this etymological contest, added that the scheme was "Hooey."

Mr. GREENWOOD looked pained. He almost burst into tears when, asked whether there would be legislation to give effect to the plans, he was





*"To do Hitler justice I think we must admit that his armies haven't ceased to move since he took over from his generals."*

received with loud laughter as he rose up brightly and said: "Oh, yes! We shall need a Bill to change the name of the Department from Ministry of Works and Buildings to Ministry of Works and Planning!"

Over in the Lords, Lord REITH, whose title is to change with that of his Ministry, explained the same plan, with much the same enthusiasm and clarity.

But—such is the perversity of public life—he was heaped with wreaths, mostly laurels, even if some of them were a bit thorny. Everybody seemed to think it a good idea, and that it would be all right when it got to the working stage. If, of course—always if . . .

Back in the Commons a Member used the word "rekitting," and Mr. McEWEN, goaded beyond endurance,

was moved to protest that M.P.s should not be permitted to invent English words.

Then there was a secret session on the shipping situation.

Thursday, February 12th. — Lord BEAVERBROOK, with his laurels as first Minister of Production fresh upon his brow, told their Lordships something about the nation's production of war goods. The most cheering thing he said was that we had a gun against which German and Italian tanks could not stand. He also said that, for ourselves, we were making ample supplies of everything, but that we had also to supply half the world, including masses of tanks we had undertaken to send to Russia soon. So we had, too often, to go without, or, at best, short.

There was a debate, patchily critical but clearly intended to be helpful.

### By-Laws

FOR membership in this the human race

No dues are charged, our book of rules reveals.

The world's your club; you're welcome to the place.

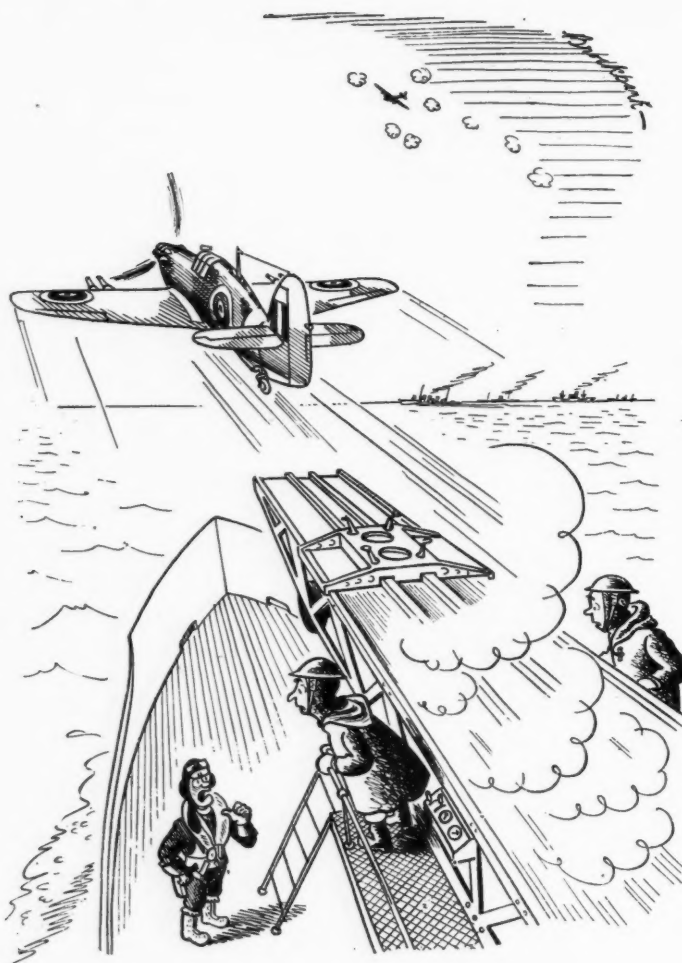
There is, however, a slight charge for meals.

o o

"The Importance of Being Earnest"

There is a famous play of Pinero's which has nearly that title. The 'earnest' is spelt differently, 'Ernest.'—Manchester Paper.

And the "Pinero" of course is spelt with a capital W.



"Don't mind me—I'm only the pilot."

### Ambition

"YOU ought to try for a commission," they said. Corporal Nibbs said it when he saw me reading *The Times*; Sergeant Dibbs said it when I told him how to spell Telecommunication; even Flight-Sergeant Ribbs said I was just the type. (I had translated *Per Ardua ad Astra* for him.) They were always appealing for officers in Orders, he said.

Suddenly I saw that they were right. Flying-Officer Hibbs, I had heard, had himself risen from the rank of Aircraftman, General Duties, so one day when I was sweeping the verandah where the flying-men sit in their wicker chairs I sprang to attention beside him,

causing him to start violently and open his eyes. When he had glanced round to see what sort of a landing he had made he noticed me. I begged his pardon, asked his forgiveness, and craved a moment of his time to speak with him on a personal matter.

"Come inside," said he, and with my broom at the trail I followed him into the Flight Office, paying compliments en route to other pilots awakened by the disturbance.

I chose my words carefully. Telling an officer that one wants to be an officer is a delicate task. But I need not have been nervous. Flying-Officer Hibbs told me that officers were badly

needed. I, he was kind enough to say, was just the type. He suggested that I should do well in the Operations Room, or perhaps in Codes and Ciphers. The thing was easily done, he said—a form to complete, a run-over by the M.O., an interview with the C.O., a Board at Adastral House... and there I was. I thanked him, rather as one officer might thank another, and went off to the Orderly Room.

The Orderly Room Flight-Sergeant did not speak at once when I asked him for a Form 2030 (Application for Commission). He continued to read a newspaper article entitled "Your Celery this Year." Then he asked me if I was Grade One.

"Yes, Flight-Sergeant," I said, leaning my broom against his desk. It is always satisfying to be able to claim complete physical fitness.

He asked me my age. I told him. "Six months too young," he said—"and one Grade too fit. Unless, that is, you have Grade Two (A) feet?"

I had not. Only slight varicose in both calves.

"You are eligible to fly. Not eligible for a commission."

I said quietly that I was willing to fly.

"When you have finished your course," said the Flight-Sergeant, beginning to eat a bar of chocolate, "you will be too old to fly. As you have a broom you might sweep out the Orderly Room."

"But Flying-Officer Hibbs said—"

"Hibbs is nuts. I'll move my chair when you want to sweep there."

I swept out the Orderly Room.

Next day I saw Flying-Officer Hibbs crossing the Parachute Section vegetable garden, stepping delicately. I approached him. He asked me absently whether I played water-polo, adding in the same breath that I could now sweep out the verandah where the wicker chairs were; he then passed on.

I swept out the verandah.

Flying-Officer Hibbs was Orderly Officer the next night. The sound of my cough brought him from his bed. I told him who I was, what had passed between us three days before, and of my visit to the Orderly Room. I was too fit, I said, and too young.

"Not Grade Two (A) feet?" he yawned.

"Only slight varicose in both calves."

"Slight varicose," he said, "means a sure turn-down for flying. Leave everything to me. Do nothing until you hear from me. Take no notice of the Orderly Room Flight-Sergeant. He's nuts."

I thanked him.

A week went by and I was still an

Aircraft-hand, General Duties. I went and hung about the verandah with my broom. Sometimes a Sergeant Air-Gunner would wake up and send me for some matches or a doughnut. I caught one of them before he dozed again and asked for Flying-Officer Hibbs. "There he is," said he, pointing to a Lockheed Hudson taking off. I asked a Sergeant-Observer later in the day. "There," he said, pointing limply at a Wellington lumbering away over the trees.

I only saw Flying-Officer Hibbs twice more. Once in a Lysander, four thousand feet up, and once as he drove out of the camp for ever, having been posted to Northern Ireland.

"How's your commission coming along?" people kept saying to me.

"Oh, coming along," I said.

One day, on impulse, passing the Adjutant, carrying two buckets of sand (I was carrying the sand), I accosted him. This was unforgivable of me, directly contrary to Air Council Instructions. I tremble now to think of it, but I was a giant in those days. I craved a few words with him on a personal matter.

"Will now suit you?" he said kindly, taking me by the elbow just as my old father used to do. I said, putting down my buckets, that it would.

In his office the Adjutant told me that "They" were crying aloud for officers. I was just the type. He would give me all the gen. He showed me a communication marked "Secret," saying that all fire extinguishers must be inspected twice a week by a responsible authority. I did not query the relevancy of this document.

What did I fancy doing? Administration and Special Duties, he said, should be about my mark. Jobs under that heading demanded intelligence, tact, quick-wittedness, initiative. His own job came under Administrative and Special Duties. He rang for the Orderly Room Flight-Sergeant, who gave me a look which I chose to regard as inscrutable, but went and fetched some Forms 2030. The Adjutant patted my arm encouragingly, and I went out into the sunshine, where a string of transports were waiting for me to move the buckets of sand.

I worked late that night, filling up the form (in triplicate). There were five pages, closely typewritten. I did my best to remember what diseases my grandparents had died of and what subjects had lost me my School Certificate sixteen years ago.

I gave the forms to the Adjutant early next day. He gave them back to me. I was to take them to the M.O.,

with whom he had lost no time in making my appointment. I tucked the forms in my tunic and went down to Station Sick Quarters, all alone in a two-ton van. I remember with embarrassment that I practised the officers' salute as I sat in the back.

The M.O.'s staff laughed when I told them the Adjutant had sent me. Then they went on talking about the Marx Brothers. They were all sergeants—plump, laughing men without a care in the world. Or so I thought until an airman in shirt-sleeves came and said they would have to have their tea without sugar. At this their faces became lined and old; brought face to face with reality in this way they took me upstairs to the M.O.

"From the Adjutant," they said. "Grade One, Commission."

The M.O. stopped drumming with his glasses on the spine of *Gray's Anatomy*, blew out his cheeks and allowed himself to slump in his chair. "What, again?" he said, and he and the sergeants laughed quietly for a little. I continued to stand at attention.

"Stand at ease," said the M.O. He looked tired, and closed his eyes before saying that it would be a waste of time to examine me. I was Grade One.

He had no power to re-categorize me. If only I had not been Grade One. If only I had been six months older. I had not, he supposed, Grade Two (A) feet? . . .

"But," I said, "the Adjutant—"

"I know," said the M.O.

The sergeants took me downstairs. If I liked to wait, they said, there might be a transport back to the camp. I waited long enough to sweep out the hall and the Crash Room, and then walked back. I went straight to the Adjutant's office. A Section Officer of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force was sitting in his chair. The Adjutant, she said, had left early to go on leave. If I could spare a minute, she said pleasantly, to sweep out the office . . . ?

I swept it out, swept under her chair and round her Grade Two (A) feet. As I stooped over the waste-paper basket my Forms 2030 fell into it out of my tunic. I would have left them there, but paper is scarce. I am writing this on the back.

#### The Summing-Up

"THE ROAD TO SINGAPORE"

"OPENED BY MISTAKE"

Harrow Cinema Programme.



"Well, that is the end of 'Works Wonders,' so back to work we go."



## At the Play

### "GOOD NIGHT, CHILDREN" (New)

THIS is a "shop" play that Mr. PRIESTLEY has given us, and the emporium in question is a rural branch of the English Broadcasting Company. This E.B.C., which is not, we are told, to be confused with our own B.B.C., has, however, certain similarities. It distributes news, views and cultural amenities. It entertains and uplifts the "Tots" before bedtime. Ex-naval men benevolently bestride its quarter-deck. Whitehall mandarins are imported to fill its loftier thrones. The Company, in short, is prim and public-schoolish on 'top, but sad and surly and rebellious in its lower administrative reaches.

Mr. PRIESTLEY is not attempting to give us in full the low-down on High-Ups. It is with the bored and frustrated juniors in the Barsetshire studio that he is most concerned. To playgoers undergoing the third February of the war there is no particular poignancy in the spectacle of young people with soft jobs in a land where it seems to be always a civilian afternoon (and sunny at that), with food and drink abounding at the Crown and the Lion across the road. But perhaps that is unfair. We must keep our own troubles out of it and accept the characters as unhappy exiles. A quarrelsome couple must cease to snarl and begin to coo for the kiddies in dulcet domesticity, and very nicely do Miss EILEEN BELDON and Mr. CHARLES GROVES make their microphonic change from tart conjugal realities to the vocal caress of parental or avuncular make-believe. There is Miss Paula Leeds (Miss GILLIAN LIND), a producer who suffers from intellectual cramp, and there is Tristan Sprott (Mr. NAUNTON WAYNE) as a soured but most amusing furnisher of Feature Programmes.

This admirable actor, whose name as certainly suggests a Cotswold wagoner as his light efficient drollery communicates a very metropolitan wit, is seen in charge of a truly rural feature in which listeners are to enjoy the folk-music and bar-parlour

goings-on of Barsetshire, with its hinds let loose among the beer and skittles. A very Phillpottsian He-Ancient is engaged to do his special turn with a monstrous wind-instrument which

is as bucolic as his name, and extracts good mumble-grumble fun from the testy toothless gaffer. We all know that villagers in 1942 are not in the least like that. But in theatrical favour, Mummersetshire will always be the Champion County.

Of course everything goes wrong. The locals let the professionals down, and the urban exiles of the E.B.C. have to prove themselves as pastoral as any of the natives. The Effects Boy, very nicely played by Mr. GEORGE COLE, becomes a musical Laocoön who manages to master the "serpent," and the ether is soon ringing with a gay simulation of the Barset "burr," and of its beer-from-the-wood-notes wild. The rehearsals and performance of all this give Mr. PRIESTLEY plenty of material, which, after a dullish start, he cleverly diverts from the monotonous. This kind of lark is apt to flutter downwards after Act I. But in this case the gaiety steadily grows and we salute the Lark Ascending. Sex of course must rear its pretty head, and love pipe up amid the pop of corks. But what matters here is the lark and not the nightingale, as *Romeo* said of another place and occasion.

In the matter of broadcasting, Mr. PRIESTLEY has something serious to say, namely, that a vast organization plus mechanization is likely to quench the springs of any artist long absorbed in it. The atmosphere of the offices defeats the efforts of the studio. Perhaps it is so, but the characters in his play are putting up a poor fight for their integrity. Surely the other kind of atmosphere may have its dulling and spicing effect. A visitor who has spent half an hour in a studio must wonder how anybody condemned to a long day in these cellars emerges with more than half a lung and a quarter of a brain in action. Chromium and cushions are no substitute for oxygen.

The plot of *Good Night, Children* may be excused from criticism on the familiar grounds that it is only a very little one. The merit lies in the incidents and the personnel. The latter have been very well chosen and there will be general appreciation of Mr. CHARLES MORTIMER, piping all hands on deck for straight-from-the-shoulder talks, of



AN ILL WIND

Tristan Sprott (a Producer) . . . . . MR. NAUNTON WAYNE  
Daisy Punnet . . . . . MISS JEAN SHORT  
Matthew Punnet . . . . . MR. R. MEADOWS WHITE

might, in learned and classical circles, be called an Ophicleide, but is just plain "serpent" to him. What comedy were possible if the part were three times as large and Sir CEDRIC HARDWICKE were here to play both it and "serpent"! In the meanwhile Mr. MEADOWS WHITE



TEACHING HIM HIS E.B.C.

Sir Reginald Runtun (D.A.D.G.)  
MR. LAURENCE HANRAY  
Paula Leeds (a Producer) . . . . . MISS GILLIAN LIND



Mr. LAURENCE HANRAY piping songs of official innocence, of Mr. CHARLES LAMB as a mournful engineer, sombrely scarlet in his politics, and of Mr. PATRICK LUDLOW as a gleefully genteel Announcer who so repulsively enjoys every word that he so politely speaks. I. B.

## Ping-Pong

I AM glad that the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* supports my use of the term Ping-Pong, for there are some who regard it as effeminate or *passé*. The upstart Table-Tennis, which appears to me to smack of exhibitionism, is rightly relegated in the *C.O.D.* to the Addenda, along with a few of the meaner crossword puzzle devices and words like *bodyline*, *yo-yo* and *nazi*.

Very little equipment is required for this ancient game. The intending player should furnish himself with a ball, two bats (not even the table-tennisites call them rackets), a table, a net, and a walking-stick.

The ball is made of celluloid and is spherical until someone treads on it. It is then sucked alternately by the players until this method of restoration has failed. Then one of the players produces a match or a petrol-lighter and holds it near to the ball. This may cause a conflagration and the abandonment of the game. If not, the ball remains dented, but both players are satisfied that Science has had her say and the game resumes with luck playing a rather more important rôle.

The net consists of a row of someone else's books, arranged (by the knowledgeable or unscrupulous) in descending order from forehand to backhand. If the books are of unequal height the depressions become points of strategic importance. If a book collapses during play it is considered right and proper for both players to manœuvre their play well away from the aperture.

The bats are curious. If official bats are used (many players prefer a slim Latin primer or a copy of *The Mill on the Floss*) the player has a choice of two very different playing surfaces. One side is coated with congealed glue originally placed there in an effort to affix a sheet of corrugated or pimpled rubber; the other side is bare and, on account of its production of the authentic ping or pong when in contact with the ball, is favoured by most ordinary players.

Play begins with the service. To serve, a player strikes the ball in such a way that it bounces over the books from his side of the table to ricochet

## WORLD WAR

THE British Navy is now facing danger in most of the seas of the world. Remember, it is to the sacrifices of these sailors that you owe many of the comforts of civilized life which you still enjoy. In return, will you not contribute to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND? A gift to this Fund enables you to express your gratitude in tangible form. You owe it to our sailors to see that they are well provided with extra comforts this winter. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

from a crack on his opponent's side. This is not as easy as it sounds: for one thing, the crack may have been filled in with chewing-gum. Another method of serving is to stare hard and long at the opponent's backhand and then to dispatch the ball swiftly to the forehand, or vice versa. This method should be used with discrimination, particularly against left-handers, as its chief merit lies in its element of surprise.

When the aggregate score of points has reached twenty the players change ends (and if the bats are of unequal dimensions, bats too) so that the other player may (1) test the toughness of

his lumbar regions against the corners of the bureau, (2) fish the ball from beneath the piano with the walking-stick, (3) aim at the crack.

Contrary to the general belief, ping-pong is one of the few games not of oriental origin, though the Chinese, it should be said, have honoured the game by naming fifty-six towns after it. The game is British to the core, having been invented by the Rev. Simon Theepfield during a wet afternoon at Lord's in the seventeenth century. In recent years British players have had to bow the knee to experts from Central Europe, but the decline is purely temporary. In the nineteenth century the game suffered through over-refinement. It was adopted enthusiastically by the night-clubs of Cheltenham, where it was known as *Vingt-et-un*. Tennyson, as poet laureate, was one of the game's greatest supporters and made frequent though covert references to the sport in *The Princess*.

In conclusion it should be noted that one school of thought avers that the game played by Sir Francis Drake at the time of the Armada affair was ping-pong and not bowls. If this theory is true the game of ping-pong may be said to have altered the whole course of British history.

## Another Apology Impending

"The Home Guard posts are, of course, the noodle points."—*Schoolboy's Essay*.



"I will publish your book if you reduce it to three and a half pounds."

## Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

### Pictorial Record

LITERALLY hundreds and hundreds of photographs and drawings crowd over and under and apparently on top of a subdued running commentary in *Britain At War—The Army* (HUTCHINSON, 21/-). Sometimes the text—supplied by Major F. YEATS-BROWN—disappears altogether for several pages at a time. It covers ably enough the tale of land operations up to the end of 1940, but it is not by any means so closely confined to one branch of the Forces as the title would suggest. Rather it deals with all the fighting ashore and with all the armies engaged, of whatever nationality, and it even discusses politics and politicians, the effects of our blockade, or the causes of the French collapse. The pictures are undeniably impressive in their kind, alive with the story of bitter war—African sunshine, Norwegian snow, Bren gunners in position on the battlements of a feudal fortress, enemy parachutists falling on a modern town, a line of Italian infantry in the act of assault, files of prisoners trudging to the horizon, bridges of rubber boats, tanks in action, the crowded beaches of Dunkirk, French towns in flames from end to end, the dull and sordid ruins of desecrated Belgium, refugees, wounded, dead, HITLER mouthing words, German soldiers moving, armed and stealthy, down an empty village street. Here is much calamity, much bravery, little glory.

### A Child's Atlantis

It was the Victorian HOOD who maintained that a child didn't seem like a child till you missed him—and the same thing may be said about homes. The art of living as practised in large Victorian families and handed on by a sort of natural apprenticeship to Victorian children is beginning to arouse a sort of wistfulness, even envy; and *Happy World* (LONGMANS, 12/6), which intimately recaptures a Victorian childhood, is a nostalgic book as well as an exemplary one. "Never was a mother easier to find"—usually in the garden—than "Mama"; and never did mother do more to keep her eleven children untrammelled and safe—coercion and insecurity were unknown. Obviously the depths of Mrs. MARY CARBERY's portrayal of her simple country-house life are deliberately profound; but its surface is strewn with little pleasures, real and imaginary, which merge when she is "finished" and confirmed into an intelligent and amused interest in the grown-up world. MATTHEW ARNOLD drives over in his yellow-wheeled gig; Mr. GLADSTONE tenderly drapes Mrs. GLADSTONE, for breakfast in bed, with that lady's own red-flannel petticoat; MARY is an ardent Christian-Socialist; but the child's delight in colour and the poet's perspective remain.

### Ships and Men

Mr. WARREN ARMSTRONG's book called *The Red Duster in War* (GOLLANCZ, 10/6) goes a long way beyond the limits suggested by its title. To quote the note on the jacket, "the grievances of the merchant seamen, an indictment of the Government's pre-war attitude, and a post-war policy," take up a good deal more space than the actual happenings of the war. Mr. ARMSTRONG evidently feels very strongly (as do many other people to-day) that the Merchant Navy has not had a fair deal in the past, and that it must have a fairer one in the future. At times, however, his enthusiasm leads him into indiscriminating indignation and a loss of

sense of proportion between major and minor grievances, while his habit of emphasizing his points by the frequent use of capital letters rather detracts than otherwise from their effectiveness. So far as the merchant seaman's grievances are concerned, most people will agree with his conclusions, as well as with his views on certain aspects of past policy, notably the undue importance attached to ships of the *Queen Mary* type. Where post-war policy is concerned he is on more debatable ground, especially in his advocacy of the revival of CROMWELL's Navigation Laws, which, in the view of many authorities on maritime history, had at the time of their repeal in 1849 become a good deal more harmful than beneficial to British shipping.

### Mechanical War

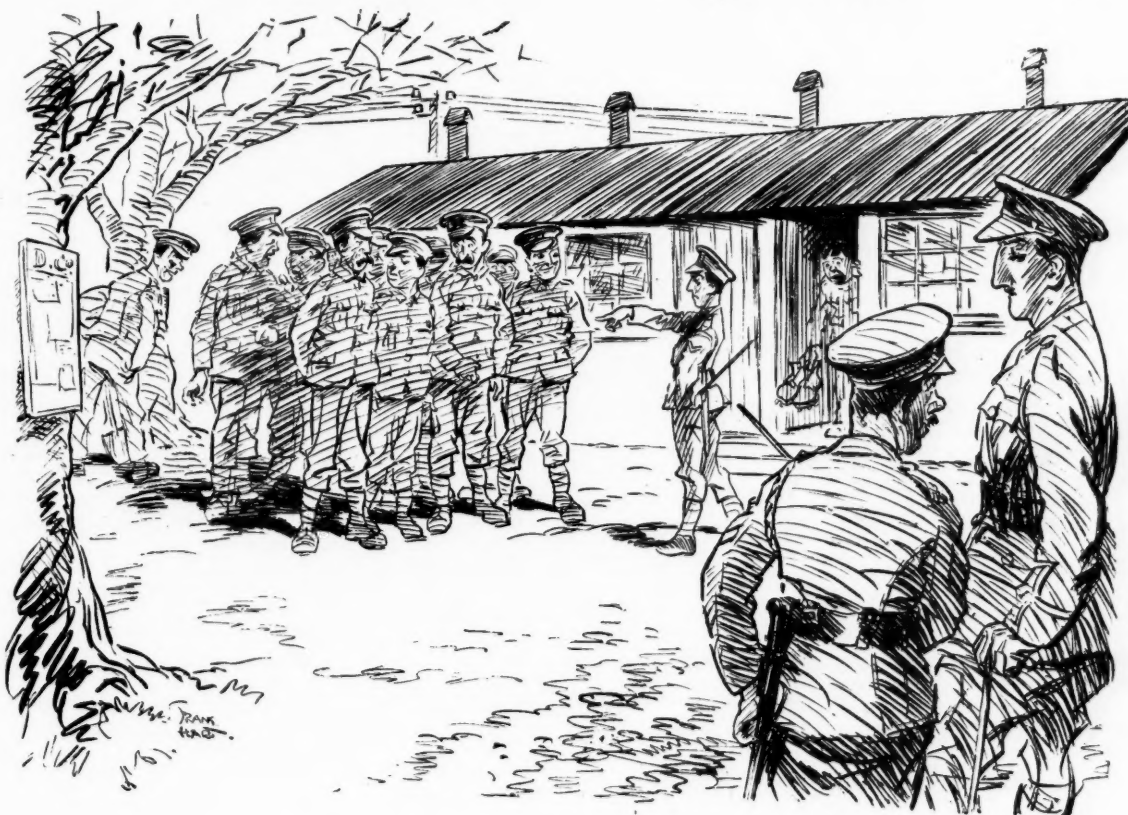
It is a far cry from the wooden tower of the Romans advancing under concealed man-power towards the walls of a beleaguered city, to the latest monsters of seventy tons or more swallowing untold petrol to do battle in Russia or Northern Africa. Professor A. M. Low bridges the centuries in *Tanks* (HUTCHINSON, 5/-), and even goes further, for he cheerfully forecasts the flying tank, the semi-flying or hedge-hopping tank, the tank that is a submarine, the one that burrows in the ground, and the one that is wholly controlled by wireless without any crew at all. In this well-condensed volume there is not only history and narrative but also a considered discussion of the tactics and strategy of tank warfare, with notes on training and even something of that new Service tradition that has sprung to life among the men who serve these uncouth, lurching, torrid, ear-splitting, claustrophobic, execrably fummy steel-plate horses and regard them much as knights of old did the living beast that carried no wireless but could whinny beneath his breast-plate. In a parched Libyan desert our men have been known to empty their water-bottles into their tank's radiator rather than leave it stranded in loneliness and uncertainty. Professor Low tells the tale well, but he has an unpleasant habit of starting a quite new sentence only a comma's pause after his previous one.

### Head and Heart

In *Dorothy Thompson's English Journey* (COLLINS, 8/6) Mr. JAMES WEDGWOOD DRAWBELL, who acted as manager, guardian, nurse and adviser to a woman whose physical and mental powers of health and strength seem to be equal, gives an account of the activities she crowded into four weeks. There is much to stimulate the mind and warm the heart. He shows us DOROTHY THOMPSON as a good companion as well as a great woman, and we have many glimpses of her imaginative kindness as well as "that abounding vitality, that endless energy, that stream of flashing thought, backed up by information and experience." There is no space here to list a half of the things she did—her talk with the QUEEN, her address to the House of Commons, her meeting with a small air-raid victim (she is now helping with his education), the impromptu speeches and the parties. Many of her broadcasts are quoted, and we are given a sketch of her private life as well. Let us be thankful for her and grateful to Mr. DRAWBELL. The book is a magnificent piece of work and one to be treasured.

### Enter Players

The three main interests of Mr. LENNOX ROBINSON's grown-up autobiography—his childish days were chronicled in *Three Homes*—are his theatrical feats as playwright and producer, "this strange Irish thing" which is Sinn Fein,



Officer. "I DON'T THINK MUCH OF THAT CORPORAL, SERGEANT."  
Sergeant. "THAT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR; HE'S IN FOR A COMMISSION."

Frank Hart, February 21st, 1917

and the friendships that arose out of both. The reader's enjoyment of the second ingredient will vary, no doubt, as he views the somewhat artificial incubation of national consciousness as a blessing or a curse. Mr. ROBINSON's own feelings were mixed; and during his second spell as manager of the Abbey Theatre, in a public debate with his master YEATS, he put in a useful plea for a more European outlook and repertory. YEATS's retort that you couldn't play translations because they had no style came soundly enough from a poetic dramatist who only cared for SHAKESPEARE; but ROBINSON the realist was unconvinced. The whole debate, and indeed all the stage experience in *Curtain Up* (JOSEPH, 10/6), is extremely interesting, ardent and alive. The remainder—in particular the author's spell as a Carnegie organizer of libraries for villages that wanted schools—is even more phantasmagorically Irish than the excellent ghost-tales that attest a convinced sceptic's inveterate concern with the occult.

### A Great Naval Family

*The Admirals Hood* (HUTCHINSON, 18/-) is the public and private history of two great admirals and their descendants. Miss DOROTHY HOOD begins with an account of Captain THOMAS SMITH's carriage breaking down near a Dorsetshire vicarage in 1740, his entertainment by the vicar, and his offer to take one of his sons to sea. Thirteen-year-old ALEXANDER accepted, and SAMUEL followed in the next year. A third brother would have joined them but his parents were anxious to preserve him. One wonders how much the Navy would have been enriched if he had had his wish instead of being drowned in "a little river." The book is full of anecdotes. Miss HOOD is evidently a natural historian, unbiased and humorous. Her book ends on a note of pride and hope—"The giant cruiser that bore their name has perished exactly as the *Invincible* did, and many hundreds of men with her. May the young Hoods now at sea in other modern sea-monsters be blessed *Ventis Secundis*."



## Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

*Q.* Our housemaid, Gertie, whom we have had with us nearly thirty years, has been unsettled of recent months as a result of the scarcity in domestic labour, and is threatening to become a Naafi. As we dread a change of service at our time of life, could you suggest any ways in which the post might be made more attractive to her? My sister and I already share between us the rough work, scrubbing, carrying coals, etc., leaving Gertie simply a little light dusting and the arrangement of the flowers. In addition we have expected her to answer the door, though she has not always seen her way to doing so. She receives a wage of 30/- per week.

E. ST. T. CRUMBLES-MORTON.

*A.* The lure of canteen life proves irresistible to certain types, even at a quite advanced age. Why not try reproducing the conditions your housemaid believes she would find in the N.A.A.F.I. by transforming your lounge into a licensed bar and keeping open house, day and night, for any members of the Forces who care to make use of it? If this does not appeal, you might find out whether Gertie would care for anything in the nature of an open-air swimming-pool or private ski-run. With some domestics, a resident hair-dresser is a powerful inducement. We shall be interested to know how you get on.

\* \* \* \*

*Q.* Some years ago, when my husband was stationed in the Society Islands, believing that we are here to help one another, and anxious to avoid that want of purpose so common among Britishers abroad, particularly women, I became a voluntary district-visitor among the native *kampongs* (villages) of Matanndravunpi. From time to time I gave little talks on such topics as Sink hygiene, Barbola-work, Care of the enlarged joint, How to prepare for the little stranger, In the vernacular, etc., and have reason to believe that my work, though it may not always have met with the response which was perhaps its due, was in fact a rather major contribution towards better things among the *dwi-dwis* (married women) of Matanndravunpi. My friends seem to think that, as things are in the Pacific, my knowledge of Matanndravunpi and of the psychology of its inhabitants might be

of interest to the War Office. Ought I to offer my services? If so, what would be the correct procedure? Though happily settled in Balham, I would be proud and glad to give myself in any direction the Government thought necessary to help on the war effort.

(Mrs.) VIVIENNE CHASE.

*A.* Your friends are right in feeling you are wasting your time in Balham. Our advice is that you write to your borough M.P., asking him to put you in touch with that department of British Intelligence, if any, now operating in the mid-Pacific. Or better still—for the capricious theatre of war might very easily have removed to, say, Tristan da Cunha or New Siberia, before you got anything fixed up—why not see what would be the result of a personal visit to the Foreign Office?

\* \* \* \*

*Q.* It seems a bit thick when folks as have given their railings, etc., to make tanks, etc., find as they have to put up with Nuisances in their front gardens after dark. Fire-watchers' feet-marks, assorted bottles, fish-and-chip papers, folks out of the Rising Sun parking bicycles and bassinets, lads and whatnot bidding good-night, etc., is only a bit of what we have to put up with, as I could name plenty more, given time. JAS. THROSTLETHWAITE.

*A.* We take it that you would like, if possible, to safeguard your property from further vandalism of the type described. Our legal adviser tells us that, provided the area in question is fenced (this may be managed symbolically with a length of tape and a couple of walking-sticks), one is within one's right to go out after dark *distraining damage feasant* any articles, animate or inanimate, found unattended upon the area in question. Having distrained, one now impounds the articles in question, animate or inanimate, in the public pound. A wise step, therefore, would be to attempt to locate your nearest pound before distraining. When the town pound has been found and one's find impounded, the pleasure of the law must be awaited pending the period necessary for such statutes as *Quia Emptores*, *De Donis Conditionalibus*, and *Habeas Corpus* to take effect.

N.B.—A pedal-cycle with rider *in situ* on saddle may not be distrained

until the rider be unseated. In the same way, it is not customary for a bassinette, if occupied, to be distrained, though its occupant may be charged with trespass.

\* \* \* \*

*Q.* I was much interested some time ago in your hints to readers on accustoming highly-strung pets to the conditions of a gas attack; and at your suggestion I purchased a zinc wash-tub and am in the habit of keeping a moistened blanket at hand to slip over it should the rattles sound. My trouble, however, is that whenever we hear the siren my Yorkshire terrier, Boompsey, seems to make a point of either darting round the back of the hat-stand or racing dangerously about the upper floors and barking from under beds. The more I crawl round chests of drawers, etc., in an attempt to put him on the leash, the more uncontrolled Boompsey becomes, pouncing out at me in the same way that he pounces after birds, with the result that I have not yet been able to try him out in the wash-tub during an alert. Do you think it is a form of hysteria, and if so, what would be the proper treatment? I need hardly say that the matter is a source of considerable worry and annoyance to me, as I do not think it right to spend an alert on my hands and knees under hat-stands, etc., when the Government has provided us with a Morrison shelter.

ADA STARKEY (Miss).

*A.* Provided there is nothing shady in Boompsey's history or parentage which you are keeping back, I should be inclined to think the matter due entirely to a lack of co-operation between your pet and you. He clearly is under the impression that you are trying to enter into the spirit of his play, and it would be a mistake to destroy his confidence. What is needed is some type of game wholly enjoyable to both. Place the wash-tub on its side from time to time when the little dog is in one of his lighter moods and bait it with some delicacy he particularly fancies. Now get into the tub yourself and, when Boompsey approaches, pounce out at him, making noises indicative of a siren and preventing him from getting at the food. These manoeuvres are repeated as many times as possible before the play begins to get really rough, when the game





## "Amongst Those Present . . ."

OH, them chaps wot writes the papers 'as a mighty lot to tell  
Of the Aussies and New Zealanders an' Indian troops as well,  
An' them youngsters from South Africa wot's givin' us a hand—  
And, mind yer, don't mistake me now, I'll say they're doin' grand!  
But it some'ow seems to 'appen when they're makin' such a fuss  
Of 'oo took this and 'oo 'eld that, yer don't 'ear much of us!  
But if yer counts the 'eads yer'll find there's five in every nine  
A-servin' in a good old English Reg'ment o' the Line!

Yus, 'tis English lads wot carries on the grand old tale to-day  
Wot takes yer back to Charles's time, and further, so they say:  
That marched with Marlborough, cursin', charfin', fightin', dyin' hard,  
At Blenheim on the Danube, Malplaquet and Oudenarde;  
Wot beat the French at Minden and at Saragossa too;  
Wot 'eld India for the Empire and stood firm at Waterloo;  
'Twas the lads from Bath and Birmingham, from Thames an' Tees an' Tyne  
In the sweatin', singin', fightin' English Reg'ments o' the Line!

Oh, the Scots was there, God bless 'em! an' the Welsh and Irish too,  
An' no one's goin' to say as 'ow we don't give them their doo,  
'Cos there wasn't nothin' in it when it came to facin' hell,  
But if yer counts the Reg'ments up 'tis numbers wot will tell.

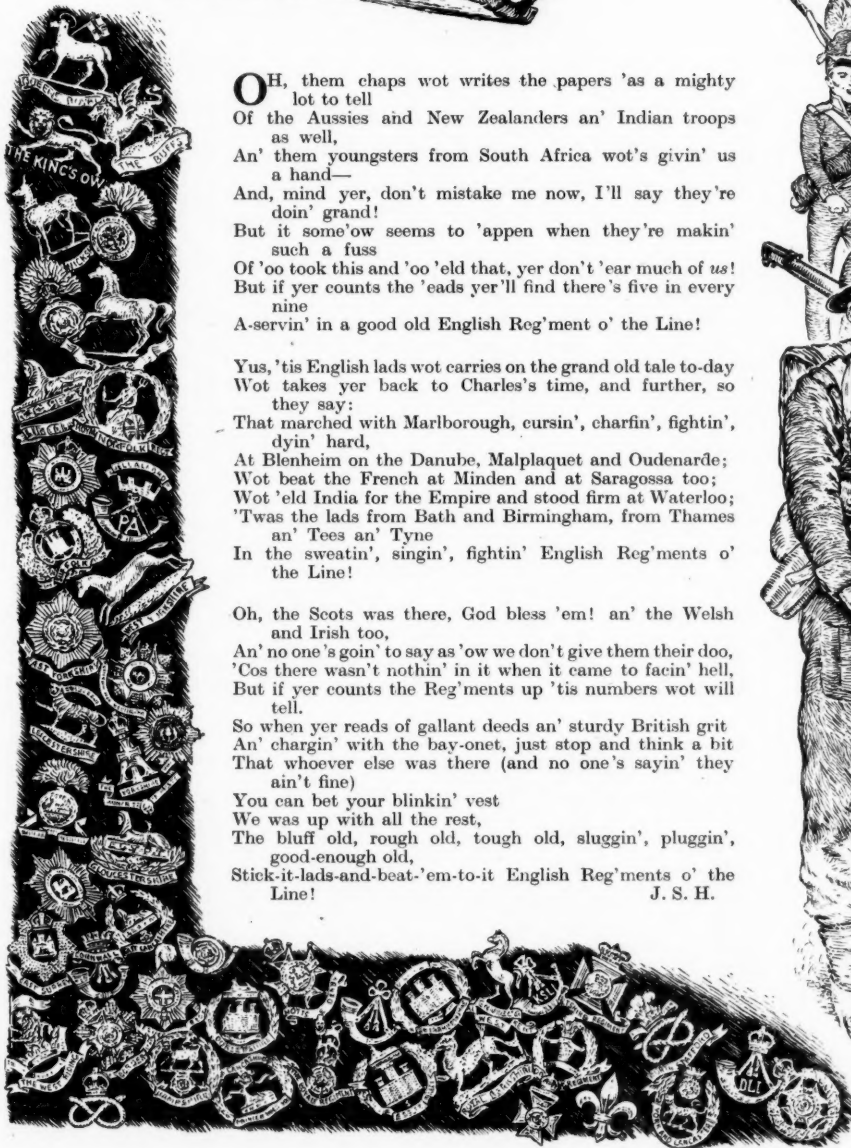
So when yer reads of gallant deeds an' sturdy British grit  
An' chargin' with the bay-onet, just stop and think a bit  
That whoever else was there (and no one's sayin' they ain't fine)

You can bet your blinkin' vest  
We was up with all the rest,  
The bluff old, rough old, tough old, sluggin', pluggin',  
good-enough old,  
Stick-it-lads-and-beat-'em-to-it English Reg'ments o' the Line!

J. S. H.



J. S. H.



terminates. The important thing is that he should *want* to get into the tub. If this technique is observed bi-weekly, unless Boompsey is some specially backward type, your pet can hardly avoid associating warbling with well-spread wash-tubs, and in the event of a genuine alert, it will be the work of a moment to adjust the tub and secure him beneath the moistened blanket.

\* \* \* \*

Q. In a recent B.B.C. talk to housewives, listeners were given to understand that even in winter the most limited town garden could provide the ingredients of a vegetable soup. Would this in any way apply to ours (9 ft. by 5 ft.), consisting of a privet hedge, two clumps of catmint, and a non-flowering lilac bush, under which we believe a wee tortoise belonging to my brother in the London Scottish to have hibernated? FLORA MACDONALD.

A. You need look no further than the privet for the foundation of a nutritious war-time *pot au feu*, known as *Hash à la Jardin de Ville*, or *Haie en Surprise*.

Take a quantity of privet trimmings and place the leaves in a fireproof dish with eight pints of rain-water, a sprig of catmint, and a soupçon of any reliable disinfectant to clear of insects. Put the twigs through the mincer and keep on one side. The tortoise is now detached from the shell by any method which seems convenient, the offal removed and the residue carefully boned. Now proceed as for French rabbit. Keep the privet moving until it is brown, when the prepared carcase is added and the whole allowed to simmer for forty-eight hours to ensure the tortoise's being tender. The hash is then skimmed carefully and garnished

with catmint. The skimmings, beaten to a stiff *mousse* with the offal and minced twigs, are dressed with a plain sauce and served in the shell.

\* \* \* \*

Q. My wife, Letitia Bush, aged 46, has become so confirmed a queue-addict that she apparently finds the sight of a number of persons in single file irresistible, no matter what the circumstances. I have reason to believe that she now automatically joins queues without even so much as the formality of inquiring into their purpose. Within the last week alone she has, in addition to numerous useless purchases, made a wholly redundant bus excursion to Chiswick, sat through four performances of *Hold Back the Dawn*, offered herself for immediate blood-transfusion, and had her shopping parcels collected from her and stored, quite needlessly, in the station cloak-room. Though not an exacting husband, I feel bound to admit that, with income tax at its present rate, I am not prepared to finance pointless excursions round Greater London and the provisioning of my house with commodities which we do not need, such as three pounds of undressed tripe and successive gills of hand-picked winkles. What is your view?

EUSTACE E. BUSH.

A. The desire to spend time standing in single file is a species of fantasy motivation. Mrs. Bush's real wish to join one of the Services having been disregarded, her subconscious is impelling her to play at being a Waaf, Wren or At, as the case may be, whenever she finds herself at large. Our advice is that you raise at once the *verbot* which has caused your wife to act in the way described. Or if you think her

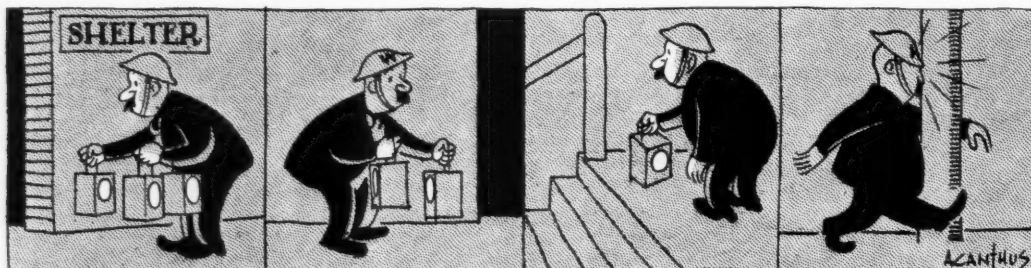
insufficiently robust for the Services, one of the provincial Meat Ministries might appeal. Here she could enjoy that sense of timeless inactivity she craves, unalloyed by the strenuous demands of Service life.

\* \* \* \*

Q. Our aunt, who lives with us and is ninety, considered Capt. Margesson's statement in the House some time ago *re* the arming of women so retrogressive that she at once commenced writing to the papers under the pseudonym "Ex-suffragette." This did little harm, beyond tiring Auntie, as none of the letters was printed; but this week, going a step further, she has got out an old fowling-piece and is using it for target-practice out of the back-bedroom window. As she already boasts of having accounted for one Muscovy duck (on the nest), one French window, two scullery windows, a garden ornament representing the goddess Flora, and a number of cold frames, I need hardly say that the neighbours are beginning to complain. What is there we can do to avoid police intervention? Auntie will not listen to reason.

"ANXIOUS."

A. While the rifle is superseded by weapons of heavier calibre these days in regular warfare, Lord Croft's scheme for home defence places manœuvres well within the scope of the ordinary family, so that your aunt's best service to British womanhood would be to train herself in the manipulation of the pike, a perfectly practicable substitute for which could be managed with any old broom-handle and a sharpened fish-slice fixed into the cleft end. Practice in feinting and parrying could be had with any suitably soft, immobile body the old lady happened to find about the house.



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